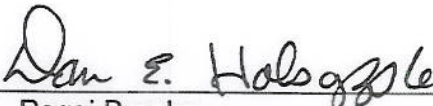


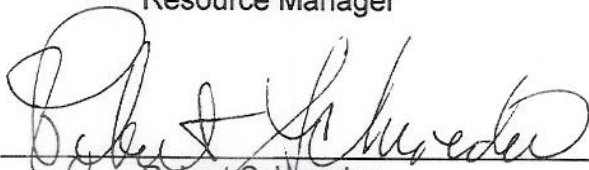
United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation

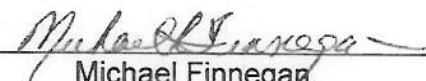
Mid-Pacific Region
Central California Area Office
Folsom, California

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Approval by United States
For An
Interim Management Plan for the Peoria Wildlife Management Area

Recommended: 
for Peggi Brooks,
Resource Manager

Concur: 
Robert Schroeder,
Chief, Division of Resources

Approved: 
Michael Finnegan,
CCAO Area Manager

Date: ~~6/21/2007~~

FONSI No: CCAO-FONSI-07-02

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
Central California Area Office, California**

**Approval by United States for
Interim Management Plan for the
Peoria Wildlife Management Area**

Finding of No Significant Impact

Lead Agency:

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
Mid-Pacific Region
Central California Area Office
Sacramento, California

This Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Peoria Wildlife Management Area has been prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, and the Council on Environmental Quality's Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508). The Central California Area Office of the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) has found that the Proposed Action will not significantly affect the quality of the environment; therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

Under the Proposed Action, Reclamation proposes to continue the closure of the access road to year-round vehicular traffic; all current bans on inappropriate and illegal activities would be enforced, and adjoining property owner rights would be recognized. Parking and trailhead facilities would be developed at the road closure point on the eastern boundary of the wildlife area and near the road closure gate at Green Springs. Regulated hiking, rock climbing, horseback riding and hunting would be permitted in the appropriate areas. Group camping would be permitted by reservation within the equestrian staging area adjacent to the Green Springs gate on New Peoria Road. Environmental education programs would be implemented to inform the visiting public about the fragile environment that exists in this area. Cooperative management programs for restoration, enhancement and habitat improvement would be developed and implemented.

Under the No-Action alternative, Reclamation would permit a continuation of the existing management practices (prior to the temporary closure of the access road). No vehicle access restrictions would continue, minimal enforcement of regulations relating to the inappropriate uses and damage to the existing natural resources. This alternative would provide minimal protection or restoration of natural, cultural or wildlife resources throughout the wildlife management area. This alternative would have provided minimal improvements to both public safety and compatible uses within the management area.

In addition to the Proposed Action and the No-Action alternative, Additional alternatives were considered but eliminated from further consideration because they failed to meet the screening criteria. These additional alternatives were:

- Prioritizing of the resource protection as the primary management objective. Creating a high degree of resource protection but decreased recreation opportunities.
- Emphasized management actions that would enhance the recreational use and opportunities of the Peoria Wildlife Management Area. Including a seasonal closure of the access road allowing for high impact/low quality recreation for a majority of the year.
- Exclusive management of the Peoria Wildlife Management Area for natural resources. Permanently closing the access road and area to all public use year round. Eliminates all opportunities for recreation and minimizes public safety and landowner violations.

FINDINGS

An Environmental Assessment (EA), distributed for public review in February and March of 2007, and the attached revisions to that EA have been prepared to disclose potential environmental impacts pursuant to NEPA. The following discussion identifies why any effects of the Proposed Action are not considered significant.

1. Reclamation's Proposed Action will have no impacts to aesthetics and agricultural resources because Reclamation is authorizing the construction of parking areas with restroom facilities at the entrance gates adjacent to the Peoria Wildlife Management Area. The parking facilities will confine vehicles to existing roadways and will prevent vehicular traffic traveling through the wildlife management area except for emergency and maintenance purposes.
2. The Proposed Action alternative will have no significant affects to air quality because the attainment status would not change as a result of this action.
3. Reclamation has written a letter determining the Proposed Action will have no affects on threatened or endangered species or other fish and wildlife resources in the Peoria Wildlife Management Area.
4. The proposed action has no potential to affect Cultural resources. Public vehicular traffic will be banned; low impact recreation such as biking and horseback riding will be permitted on existing roadways and trails. No trails will be developed in the future without additional environmental review of the proposed trail locations.
5. No significant impacts to mineral resources, population and housing, public services, recreation, and utilities and service systems, are anticipated because the action does not authorize or otherwise control any construction or physical changes beyond use of existing trails or roadways within the management area.

6. No impacts to noise (namely no increase in noise associated with transportation) or impacts to transportation and traffic are anticipated.
7. No Indian Trust Assets (ITA) have been identified within the project study area. Therefore the Proposed Action has no effect on Indian Trust Assets.
8. No disproportionately high or adverse environmental or human health impact on minority or low-income communities have been identified for this Proposed Action. Therefore the Proposed Action has no effect on Environmental Justice.
9. Under the Proposed Action, natural resource management actions identified in both alternatives #2 and #5 are incorporated into Peoria Wildlife Management Plan to provide better protection of both the cultural and natural resources, while permitting continued low-impact recreation opportunities.
10. Under the Proposed Action, implementation of all of the management actions would meet the management goals of the Interim Plan.
11. Under the Proposed Action, the Interim Peoria Wildlife Management Plan is to remain in effect and serve as the managing document for this area until such time as a Resource Management Plan and supporting environmental documentation addressing the entire New Melones Project is completed and implemented.

CONCLUSIONS

Reclamation has fully evaluated the information and analysis contained in the EA as amended for the execution of an Interim Peoria Wildlife Management Plan. On the basis of these considerations, Reclamation has determined that the EA adequately and accurately addresses the environmental issues and impacts of the Proposed Action and finds that the Proposed Action is not a major federal action that will significantly impact the quality of the human environment. Therefore, an EIS is not required and will not be prepared for this project, based on the fact that there will be no long-term adverse impacts on the human environment resulting from the execution of an Interim Wildlife Management Area Plan.